

Appl. No. 09/849,843
Atty. Docket No. 8120
Amdt. dated March 29, 2005
Customer No. 27752

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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method for cleaning fabric articles in a laundering apparatus, said method comprising the steps of:

- a) uniformly applying to the fabric articles a quantity of cleaning fluid from about 20% by dry weight of the fabric articles up to the absorption capacity of the fabric articles, wherein said cleaning fluid comprises a lipophilic fluid and an adjunct, said lipophilic fluid is selected from the group consisting of octamethylcyclotetrasiloxane, decamethylcyclopentasiloxane, dodecamethylcyclohexasiloxane, and mixtures thereof; and
- b) mechanically removing said applied quantity of cleaning fluid from said fabric articles such that the quantity of cleaning fluid remaining on said fabric articles after the removing step is from about 20% to about 100% by dry weight of the fabric articles;

wherein said method is a non-immersive method containing essentially no free cleaning fluid.

2. (original) A method according to Claim 1 wherein step a) comprises applying a quantity of said cleaning fluid from about 75% of the absorption capacity up to the absorption capacity of the fabric articles.

3. (original) A method according to Claim 2 wherein step a) comprises applying said quantity of said cleaning fluid onto said fabric articles while tumbling said fabric articles.

4. (original) A method according to Claim 3 wherein said quantity of said cleaning fluid is applied by spraying said cleaning fluid onto said fabric articles.

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5. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 1 wherein said laundering apparatus comprising an applicator-remover capable of:

- (i) evenly distributing said cleaning fluid on a retained load of fabric articles;
and
- (ii) removing said cleaning fluid from said fabric articles.

6. (original) A method according to Claim 1 wherein step a) comprises applying a quantity of said cleaning fluid from about 20% by dry weight of the fabric articles to less than 75% of the absorption capacity of the fabric articles.

7. (original) A method according to Claim 6 wherein said quantity of cleaning fluid

- i) is applied in a portion by spraying small droplets of said cleaning fluid onto said fabric articles while spinning said fabric articles; and
- ii) tumbling said fabric articles after spraying said fabric articles in step i) to reposition said fabric articles; and

wherein said sequential spinning i) and tumbling ii) steps are repeated at least once.

8. (original) The method of Claim 1 wherein said quantity of cleaning fluid is applied by spraying small droplets of said cleaning fluid onto said fabric article, wherein the small droplets have an average droplet size of from about 100 micrometers to about 1000 micrometers.

9. (original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising the step of:

- c) evaporatively removing a portion of the applied quantity of cleaning fluid from said fabric articles.

10. (original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising the step of:

- d) contacting said fabric articles with impinging gas.

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11. (original) The method of Claim 1 wherein step b) comprises spinning said fabric articles at a centrifugal acceleration of from about 1050 m/s^2 to about 4450 m/s^2 .

12. (original) The method of Claim 1 wherein said cleaning fluid comprises from about 50% to about 100% by weight of said lipophilic fluid.

13. (canceled).

14. (currently amended) The method of Claim ~~13~~ 1 wherein said lipophilic fluid comprises decamethylcyclopentasiloxane.

15. (previously presented) The method of Claim 14 wherein said cleaning fluid comprises greater than 0% to about 50% by weight of cleaning fluid of an adjunct, said adjunct being selected from the group consisting of water, builders, water-soluble surfactants, oil-soluble surfactants, carbon dioxide-philic surfactants, emulsifying agents, enzymes, bleach activators, bleach catalysts, bleach boosters, bleaches, antibacterial agent, colorants, perfume, lime soap dispersants, odor control agents, odor neutralizers, polymeric dye transfer inhibiting agents, crystal growth inhibitors, photobleaches, heavy metal ion sequestrants, anti-tarnishing agents, anti-microbial agents, anti-oxidants, anti-redeposition agents, soil release polymers, electrolytes, pH modifiers, thickeners, abrasives, divalent ions, metal ion salts, enzyme stabilizers, corrosion inhibitors, diamines, suds stabilizing polymers, solvents, process aids, fabric softening agents or actives, sizing agents, optical brighteners, hydrotropes, and mixtures thereof.

16. (original) A method of Claim 1 wherein said method further comprises delaying step b) for a period of about 10 seconds to about 30 minutes.

17. (original) A method of Claim 16 wherein said fabric articles are tumbled during said delay step.

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18. (original) A method of Claim 1 wherein at least one of steps a) and b) is repeated at least one time.

19. (original) A method of Claim 18 wherein said method further comprises repeating one or more times step a) about 10 seconds to about 5 minutes after step b).

20. (original) A method of Claim 18 wherein said cleaning fluid of step a) further comprises a finishing agent.

21. (original) A method of Claim 20 wherein said finishing agent is selected from the group consisting of lipophilic fluid, water, finishing polymers, odor control agents, odor neutralizers, perfumes, properfumes, anti-static agents, antimicrobial agents, soil release agents, fabric softening agents or actives, insect and/or moth repelling agents, light protecting agents, sizing agents, crisping agents, hand-modifying agents and mixtures thereof.

22. (original) A method of Claim 1 wherein said method further comprises a step of:
e) applying a finishing agent-containing composition to said fabric articles.

23. (original) A method of Claim 22 wherein said finishing agent-containing composition is applied at a quantity of from about 0.1% to about 100% by dry weight of said fabric articles.

24. (original) The method of Claim 21 wherein said finishing agent is uniformly applied to the fabric articles.

25. (original) The method of Claim 21 wherein said finishing agent comprises a fabric softening agent or active.

26. (original) The method of Claim 25 wherein said fabric softening agent or active comprises a cationic moiety.

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27. (original) The method of Claim 25 wherein said fabric softening agent or active is a quaternary ammonium salt.

28. (original) The method of Claim 27 wherein said quaternary ammonium salt is selected from the group consisting of: N,N-dimethyl-N,N-di(tallowyloxyethyl) ammonium methylsulfate, N-methyl-N-hydroxyethyl-N,N-di(canoyloxyethyl) ammonium methylsulfate and mixtures thereof.

29. (original) The method of Claim 21 wherein said finishing fluid comprises a hand-modifying agent.

30. (original) The method of Claim 29 wherein said hand-modifying agent comprises a polyethylene polymer.

31. (original) The method of Claim 2 wherein said method further comprises a step of applying a finishing agent to the fabric articles prior to step c).

32. (original) The method according to Claim 1 wherein the method further comprises a step of:

f) collecting the lipophilic fluid removed from the fabric articles.

33. (original) The method according to Claim 1 wherein the method further comprises a step of:

g) reapplying the lipophilic fluid removed from the fabric articles to the fabric articles.

34. (original) A fabric article treated by the method according to Claim 1.